cultural geographies essay

Indigenous spectrality and the politics of postcolonial ghost stories

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This essay considers the politics of describing Indigenous peoples as ghostly or haunting presences. Focusing on the history of haunting tropes in Canadian cultural production and the recent re-emergence of the spectral Indigenous figure in, among other places, a wilderness park in southwestern British Columbia, I argue that the mobilization of haunting tropes to make sense of contemporary settler-Indigenous relations reinscribes colonial power relations and fails to account for the specific experiences and claims of Indigenous peoples. At a time when cultural geographers are contemplating the possibilities of a 'spectral turn', this essay asks what politics are involved in deploying a spectro-geographical approach to studies of the colonial and postcolonial.

Keywords: haunting • Nlaka'pamux • postcolonialism • spectrality • Stein Valley

> The named marginal is as much a concealment as a disclosure of the margin.[1]
>
> (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak)

In Avery Gordon's exploration of haunting and its role in the sociological imagination, she argues that the appearance of ghosts represents, above all, a claim upon us, an insistence that we acknowledge the role we play in present injustices. Ghosts notify us of our involvement and they 'inaugurate the necessity of doing something about [that involvement]'.[2] Ghosts, it seems, have a politics, and it should therefore come as no surprise, in an era of decolonizing and anti-colonial scholarship, that ghosts have increasingly occupied the imagination of those who aim to trouble, uncover, and interrogate the play of the colonial past in this ongoing colonial present.[3] In recent writings ghosts allude to the presence of that which has been excluded, marginalized, and expelled;[4] although themselves immaterial and spectral, they gesture towards the materiality of colonized and abject bodies.[5] Ghosts unsettle the assumed stability and integrity of western temporalities and spatialities[6] and seem to embody the mismatch between the ideal and the real, the present and the absent. Ghosts, Derrida reminds us, trouble any efforts to finish and close; it is only by living with, talking with, and accommodating our ghosts that we might 'learn to live'[7] in these 'post'colonial times.

In recent years, full articles and books have been devoted to the ghostly, the spectral, and the uncanny,[8] and these works have made important contributions to an emerging 'spectro-geographical' interest in the discipline.[9] But alongside this more focused interest in spectrality

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there has also been an increase in passing, metaphorical references to 'haunting' in recent scholarship. It seems that everything, these days, is 'haunted', whether it be memories, places, ideologies, or ontologies.[10] Haunting is a compelling metaphor for those engaged in studies of the emergent and immaterial, for those interested in identifying unnamed influences in contemporary thought, for studies into the textures of place and memory, and for general references to a present constituted by the non-linear enfolding of multiple, conflicting pasts. Scholars working within and across psychoanalytical, postcolonial, feminist, and posthumanist frameworks have all drawn upon haunting metaphors in recent years, and many geographers have begun to incorporate adjectives like 'spectral', 'haunting', and 'ghostly' into their writing. Haunting, it seems, has acquired a kind of tropic status in the discipline, particularly among geographers concerned with the colonial and postcolonial.

The very slipperiness and indeterminacy of haunting makes it amenable to a great variety of invocations and seems to capture something of the unfinished, contested nature of colonial and postcolonial geographies, but in this essay I ask what risks are involved in deploying a 'spectrogeographical' lens in studies of the colonial and postcolonial, and particularly in figuring Indigenous bodies, voices, and histories in ghostly terms. If, as Haraway notes, we inevitably read the world through tropes, we can still choose 'less-deadly version[s] for moral discourse',[11] and at a time when spectral metaphors are proliferating, it seems crucial to interrogate the 'deadliness' of this particular line of thought. I would like to make a contribution along these lines by drawing attention to the longer history of haunting tropes in Canada and their re-emergence in the past decade or so in, among other places, a wilderness park in southwestern British Columbia. My intent is to draw points of connection between past and present hauntologies and interrogate the positionality of those who figure Indigenous peoples in ghostly terms. I will argue that allegorical representations of Indigenous peoples as ghosts haunting the Canadian state reinscribe colonial relations even as they are characterized as 'post' colonial expressions of recognition and redress, raising questions about the politics of postcolonial ghost stories.

In a recent review of the proliferation of haunting metaphors in Canadian cultural production, Goldman and Saul cite Canadian settler-author Catherine Parr Traill's declaration that 'ghosts or spirits… appear totally banished from Canada. This is too matter-of-fact a country for such supernaturals to visit'.[12] Traill made this claim in 1833, but it was echoed by poet and critic Earle Birney in 1947 when he stated that 'it's only by our lack of ghosts we're haunted'.[13] Birney was referring to certain Canadians' preoccupation with their apparent 'lack' of history in comparison to their American neighbours, a matter of particular nationalist concern that has defined Canadian cultural production for decades. Such claims to 'ghostlessness', however, are more the exception than the rule. Northey[14] argues that, in fact, ghosts have been at the center of nation-building projects in Canada for a long while, beginning in the nineteenth century. In particular, and of relevance to this essay, Bentley[15] argues that ghosts have been instrumental figures in efforts to connect Aboriginality with settler history, creating an aesthetic link between the 'Indian past' and the settler present. The Aboriginal ghost has been used to evoke a generalized sense of history in the Canadian landscape, but always with a sense of linearity and succession. It is assumed that Aboriginal ghosts are all that remains of the 'disappearing Indian', and that settler-Canadians have inherited this rich land from those who have now 'passed'.

The 'spectral native' was a particularly common figure among the Confederation poets, a group of writers working at the turn of the twentieth century who aimed to cultivate a uniquely Canadian literary voice and articulate the grounds for a budding Canadian nationalism.[16] One of their more celebrated members, Duncan Campbell Scott, also spent his career in the federal Department of Indian Affairs, holding the post of Deputy Superintendent from 1923–1932, the era during which some of the most restrictive and assimilative policies relating to Aboriginal peoples were crafted and implemented. While traveling into Northern Ontario to arrange for the surrender of Cree and Ojibway lands in 1905, Scott wrote a poem entitled 'Indian Place Names' that begins:

> The race has waned and left but tales of ghosts,
> That hover in the world like fading smoke
> About the lodges: gone are the dusty folk
> That once were cunning with the thong and snare
> And mighty with the paddle and the bow;
> They lured the silver salmon from his lair,
> They drove the buffalo in trampling hosts,
> And gambled in the teepees until dawn.
> But now their vaunted prowess is all gone,
> Gone like a moose-track in April snow.
> But all the land is murmurous with the call
> Of their wild names that haunt the lovely glens
> Where lonely water falls, or where the street
> Sounds all day with the tramp of myriad feet.[17]

Scott wrote a number of mournful Indian poems like this one, lamenting the loss of the very cultures he was instrumental in attacking. Although critics like Stan Dragland[18] have argued that Scott's poetry gave expression to his inner torment over the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into Canadian society, Groening[19] insists that Scott's poems supported and articulated his assimilationist agenda. Ghostly, fading Indians, regrettable or not, were an essential component of Scott's vision as Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Scott was unequivocal that Indians should 'progress into civilization and finally disappear as a separate and distinct people, not by race extinction but by gradual assimilation with their fellow citizens',[20] and the motif of fading, spectral Indians in Scott's poetry worked to naturalize the policies he enacted as Deputy Superintendent. The portrayal of Indigenous peoples as fading ghosts extended far beyond Scott's poetry, but the political implications of Scott's use of this trope are particularly stark given the context within which 'Indian Place Names' was written. Scott was engaged in negotiations with real, live 'Indians' when he wrote this poem, and it is this mismatch between the poem's aestheticized 'ghosting' of Indigenous peoples and their embodied, material existence around the treaty table that is of note. This mismatch becomes all the more resonant from a contemporary vantage point: the Cree and Ojibway clearly did not 'wane', after all. They were real then and they are real today, in spite of Scott's efforts, both poetic and bureaucratic.

Scott is clearly a unique case; his occupation as both a poet and a high-ranking bureaucrat demand that the interdigitation of his governmental and literary texts be interrogated. But the prevalence of ghostly Indigenous figures in Canadian cultural production extends far

beyond Scott, and this prevalence in and of itself is worthy of note. Cariou argues that spectral Native figures are 'part of the iconic vocabulary of Euro-American Gothic romances',[21] citing the employment of such figures in prairie literatures from the 1930s to the present day. Margaret Atwood[22] has pointed to the importance of Aboriginal ghosts in constructions of the Canadian North as malevolent and mysterious, and Goldman and Saul identify an interest in haunting among contemporary writers such as Ann-Marie MacDonald, Jane Urquhart, Timothy Findley, and Michael Ondaatje,[23] some of whom have made explicit links between Canadian history, Indigenous ghosts, and the politics of land and inheritance. Gelder and Jacobs' important study of Indigenous ghosts as uncanny manifestations of settler unease, along with more recent work by Australian scholars, suggest that the ghost is a compelling figure in settler colonies more generally.[24] Indeed, Bergland's comprehensive study of the 'Indian ghost' in American literature traces the figuration of Indigenous peoples as 'demons, apparitions, shapes, specters, phantoms, or ghosts'[25] over the past three hundred years, noting the connection between Indigenous spectrality and colonial figurations of land and power. It seems that recent turns to the 'spectral' as a metaphor for coming to terms with colonialism are by no means original. The fact that settler colonies like Canada, Australia, and the United States are not 'post' colonial in the sense of being 'beyond' or 'after' colonialism may explain the ongoing importance of the Indigenous ghost in the settler imagination, but whatever continuities may exist between past and present settler hauntologies, it is important to note that recent invocations of the Indigenous ghost are frequently understood to be 'post' colonial and even decolonizing gestures. The final report of the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, for example, a commission meant to address some of the foundations of contemporary conflicts between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state, frames Canadian history as 'haunted' by colonial injustices:

> Studying the past tells us who we are and where we came from. It often reveals a cache of secrets that some people are striving to keep hidden and others are striving to tell. In this case, it helps explain how the tensions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people came to be, and why they are so hard to resolve.… In our report, we examine that history in some detail, for its ghosts haunt us still. The ghosts take the form of dishonoured treaties, theft of Aboriginal lands, suppression of Aboriginal cultures, abduction of Aboriginal children, impoverishment and disempowerment of Aboriginal peoples.[26]

The report goes on to outline the ways in which these ghosts might be laid to rest and an era of 'peace and harmony' might be initiated. According to a recent *University of Toronto Quarterly* special issue devoted to 'haunting' in Canadian cultural production,[27] spectral accounts of Indigenous-settler relations have proliferated in the decade since the Royal Commission. One of the places such stories have emerged is in a wilderness park in southwestern British Columbia. These stories raise important questions about the use of spectral tropes for making sense of contemporary settler colonies like Canada.

The Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park is a provincial park protecting the 'last unlogged, intact watershed'[28] in southwestern BC. The park stretches from the Coast mountain range inland to the deep cuts of the Fraser Canyon. It is rugged, mountainous country, largely unknown to most non-Aboriginal British Columbians until the mid 1980s when environmental activists realized that the valley was slated for logging. The valley has always been important to the Nlaka'pamux, whose traditional territory encompasses the watershed. It has

been used as a source of food, a travel route between inland and coastal territories, contains numerous rock paintings, and is a site for vision quests and other activities. According to an activist who was central in the campaign to protect the Stein, however, such uses were downplayed by logging companies intent on extracting timber from the valley.[29] In the rush to protect the Stein, a coalition of First Nations, environmental activists, and scholars therefore self-consciously worked to 'fill' the valley with signs of Aboriginality, emphasizing its spiritual significance and insisting on the integrity of the Valley as a whole, charged space.[30] T-shirts, posters, and flyers were emblazoned with rock art images and a coffee table book was assembled to showcase the Valley and raise funds for its protection.[31] Wilderness concerts were staged to draw attention to the plight of the valley[32] and the 'Stein Rediscovery' Program was launched, a program aimed at reacquainting Lytton, Lillooet, and Mt. Currie Band youth with their traditional culture through extended journeys into the Stein.

Ultimately these multiple conservation efforts were successful. By 1995, a park co-managed by the provincial government and the Lytton First Nation was declared. The park was named 'Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park: A Living Museum of Cultural and Natural History', one of the first parks in Canada to highlight its Indigenous heritage. As Braun[33] has argued with regards to Clayoquot Sound, however, a particular kind of Indigeneity was emphasized in the creation of the park. Notions of a pure, static, 'ancient' Indigeneity aligned with a pure and untamed nature predominated. This was a Stein of 'living, loving arms', with 'laughter on the breeze',[34] a charismatic space that was characterized by David Suzuki as palliative for a society 'desperately in need of environmental and spiritual restoration'.[35] Descriptions of the Stein as a benevolent and healing spiritual place predominated in articles, flyers, reports, and images produced to protect the valley from logging.[36] Notably, the 'spirits' of the Stein were construed as universally welcoming and protective:

> In truth, ancestors still sing in the Stein, using words which have remained unchanged throughout centuries. In truth, there is laughter on the breeze, and each tree, each stone, is alive. That the ancestors have always protected the Stein, and always will, is true; and the Stein, in turn, protects all.[37]

Efforts on the part of the Lytton, Mt. Currie, and Lillooet Bands to protect the Stein were embedded in a broader political movement to regain control over their traditional territories, a movement that began to gain some momentum in the mid-1990s. After over a century of demands on the part of the province's First Nations for official treaties and land claim settlements, the British Columbia treaty process finally resulted in a settlement in 1998, when the Nisga'a Nation successfully regained title over a portion of their traditional territory in northern British Columbia.[38] 'Suddenly', or so it seemed to a number of non-Aboriginal British Columbians, the entire province was up for grabs,[39] and a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty over land tenure began to emerge.[40] It was in this context that the spirits of the Stein began to figure in different terms than the coffee table books celebrated, and the notion of the Stein as 'haunted' by Aboriginal ghosts began to appear.

'*Everyone* knows that the Stein is haunted',[41] notes one former resident of Vancouver, but the valley's hauntings remain an unsubstantiated 'urban legend'. Interviews conducted with non-Aboriginal informants who have hiked in the Stein Valley since the late 1990s nevertheless reveal a number of haunting stories ranging from a vague sense of unease in the Valley

to accounts of ghostly apparitions. Importantly, all those I have interviewed[42] characterize these spectral experiences as frightening, unsettling, and scary, and describe an impression of being unwelcome trespassers in what is ostensibly a public park. One hiker notes that 'the site gave us a sense that we were trespassing somehow, and that there was still a presence there'.[43] Another suggests: 'I think it was just feeling like we were intruding on somebody, and they were threatening in some way'.[44] Much like the postcolonial ghost stories Gelder and Jacobs' discuss in *Uncanny Australia*, these are stories about being unwelcome, illegitimate, and vulnerable to malevolent Indigenous ghosts. Although the Stein was set up as a 'living museum' to showcase the Valley's cultural history, Gelder and Jacobs argue that such museological containment has become increasingly untenable in decolonizing settler nations like Canada and Australia. Museologically-framed 'exhibits' like Asking Rock, described below, take on a whole new resonance for a settler society experiencing 'growing anxiety… regarding the legitimacy of their claims to belonging on what they call "their" land':[45]

> There are many rock paintings sites in the Stein Valley. A good example is the one known as 'Asking Rock' situated near Stryen Creek. At this site Nlaka'pamux people stop, recite a prayer, and ask permission to travel through the valley in safety. Some people leave offerings of burnt sage and tobacco to accompany their prayers.[46]

Although this park brochure implies that only Nlaka'pamux need ask for permission to travel through the valley, non-Aboriginal British Columbians have become increasingly aware of their failure to ask for permission to traverse and settle the province's lands, and I would argue that sites like Asking Rock are no longer read as 'neutral', museological exhibits. Indeed, the presence and claims of Aboriginal peoples in the Stein Valley, presences that were purposely highlighted throughout the 1980s to ensure the Valley's conservation as a 'wilderness' space, seem to undercut the legitimacy of non-Aboriginal wilderness enthusiasts traversing the Stein in the more politicized climate of contemporary treaty-making.

Following Gelder and Jacobs,[47] one might interpret contemporary hauntings in the Stein as manifestations of a certain uncanny, unsettled sense of place for those non-Aboriginal British Columbians who are struggling to come to terms with their (il)legitimate presence in the province. Aboriginal ghosts represent the 'return of the repressed'[48] for settler-colonists, an uncanny reminder of the illegimitacy and injustice at the heart of land resettlement in the province. But whether or not one finds a psychoanalytic reading of the Stein Valley ghost stories compelling, it seems to me that one might more productively query the ways in which these stories manage to 'write out' the bodies and voices of living, politically active Indigenous peoples. In spite of the implicit recognition of Aboriginal 'presence' in these stories, postcolonial hauntings in the Stein do not seem to account for *living* Indigenous peoples any more than Scott's poems did a century ago. Not only do these ghost stories jar against Nlaka'pamux accounts of the spirits of the Stein as universally protective and welcoming, they also continue a longstanding practice of relegating Aboriginality to the immaterial and spectral past. Hikers do not recount stories of live, angry Nlaka'pamux asking them to leave, but rather tell stories of disembodied 'spirits' emerging from an evocative landscape. These ghosts do not speak or act; they haunt by virtue of their very existence. As the peoples of the Mt. Currie and Lytton Bands declared during the 'Save the Stein' campaign, they are far too accustomed to a spectral condition:

> As we live through our daily lives as Indians, eventually we become accustomed to the fact that non-native people can see right through us. We don't mean that these people understand us fully or somehow sense the innermost workings of the Indian heart, because it seems to us that most non-native people don't take the time to come to this kind of knowledge. We mean simply that the majority of the non-natives view us as invisible peoples who really should not exist outside museums.[49]

These comments highlight the specific, lived experience of ghostliness and not a generalized, metaphoric condition of Indigenous spectrality. Spivak has highlighted the importance of drawing a distinction between the singular and the general in accounts of the colonial and postcolonial.[50] She emphasizes the importance of understanding the 'singular' not so much as an instance of the general, but rather as that which marks, in Baucom's words, a 'cryptic, secretive space…, discloses the presence of that withheld space, but "guards" its secret'.[51] In other words, as Baucom has argued in reference to the generalized sense of haunting evoked by stories of the drowning of 132 slaves on the Atlantic crossing of the *Zong* in 1781, postcolonial scholars must pay attention to the ways in which singular, specific historical experiences and events are translated into generalized allegories of a reprehensible colonial past. He insists that the specificity of these histories must be stripped away in order for them to circulate as evocative signs of 'that kind' of history, and that the 'value' of a specific history is only legible in this generalized state. There is a certain violence, then, in the evocation of a general sense of haunted (un)settlement in places like the Stein Valley. It is a haunting that speaks not to the particular ways in which Nlaka'pamux have experienced and objected to colonial policies and practices (experiences and concerns that they specifically articulated, for example, to Gilbert Malcolm Sproat, Joint Indian Reserve Commissioner, as Sproat traveled through their territory in the summer of 1878, tasked with allotting small reserve lands for the use of the Nlaka'pamux and thus clearing the way for non-Aboriginal settlement),[52] but rather to a generalized sense of the contemporary resonance of 'that kind' of history. This generalized and allegorical understanding of the colonial past inevitably leads, Baucom argues, to an equally generalized 'fantasy'[53] of postcolonial justice, to the notion of reconciliation with ghosts rather than a reckoning with the specific and ongoing violences of colonialism. 'In poll after poll, Canadians have said that they want to see justice done for Aboriginal people, but they have not known how',[54] reports the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, in spite of the fact that Aboriginal peoples have consistently and forcefully articulated their specific demands for justice.

What does it mean, then, to be 'haunted' in a decolonizing settler colony like British Columbia? *Who* is haunted in these stories, and who or what is doing the haunting? What kind of future might these hauntings demand? Do they signal, as Derrida intended, a recognition of the always unfinished and *unfinishable* in our relation to the present and past and, by extension, a sense of generosity and hospitality towards ghosts? Or do they, as Sarah Ahmed[55] has argued in relation to white guilt in postcolonial Australia, constitute yet another self-referential engagement with the colonial past, in which the experiences and desires of the settler occlude consideration of other desires and possibilities? This is the reason for my wariness in the face of haunting tropes, for I fear that postcolonial ghost stories risk perpetuating a kind of endless 'dancing around a wound'[56] that Daniel David Moses identifies among liberal, left-leaning Canadians, anxiously replaying their complicity in an ugly colonial past while neglecting to mobilize effectively for change in the present. The ghosts of the

Stein do not seem to me to represent the Nlaka'pamux with very much dignity or agency, and surely any postcolonial trope we might mobilize ought at the very least to figure Indigenous peoples with dignity. In Haraway's terms, it seems to me that 'haunting' has the potential to function as a particularly 'deadly' trope, one that requires the death and immateriality of Indigenous peoples to make an e/affective claim on non-Indigenous British Columbians. It is a trope within which today's living descendents of the generalized 'spirits' haunting the Stein, people like Chiefs Leonard Andrew and Ruby Dunstan, seem to have no place:

> As the direct descendents of those aboriginal peoples who have inhabited, shared, sustained, and been sustained by the Stein Valley for tens of thousands of years down to the present, our authority in this watershed is inescapable… Under the cooperative authority of our two bands we will maintain the Stein Valley as a wilderness in perpetuity for the enjoyment and enlightenment of all peoples.[57]

And so, at a time when (primarily non-Aboriginal) geographers, among others, seem to have taken an interest in ghostly matters, it seems critical to acknowledge that ghostliness is a politicized state of being. Many scholars have interpreted these politics as a function of visibility – that is, they suggest that the uncovering and exposure of the ghosts of the past is an emancipatory act. In many cases this may be true, but I would suggest that there is also a politics of vision involved in these hauntologies. Those who see and imagine ghosts are as deserving of interrogation as the ghosts themselves, and the ghosts of the Stein are profoundly self-referential. And so while the spectral does seem to offer a means of conceptualizing that which we cannot easily see, even of giving some voice to colonial traumas, confining the Indigenous to the ghostly also has the potential to re-inscribe the interests of the powerful upon the meanings and memories of place.

Further, while in this essay I have bracketed out the possibility that non-Aboriginal hikers truly are connecting with a complex spiritual world in the Stein, I think Métis scholar Warren Cariou's comments on postcolonial ghosts are worth considering. In contrast to the horror, anxiety, and sense of punishment or revenge conveyed by Indigenous ghosts in settler literatures, Cariou points out that

> for Native readers and writers, there is no reason that … Indigenous ghosts or spirits should be frightening. Native people already have plenty of evidence in their daily lives of how the legacies of colonialism have been passed down through the generations; they do not need to summon specters to fulfill that function. But Native writers do represent spirits in their work nonetheless; it is just that these spirits are not necessarily figures of uncanny terror. They may be malevolent beings such as the wihtiko or the skeleton-spirit Pahkakos, but they may also be figures of healing, ceremony, or political action. Or they may simply be ancestors. And while many such spirits do seem to address the transgressions of the colonial past, they usually do so as part of a call for some kind of redress or change in the present.[58]

Haunting need not be about forgetting, avenging, and lurking; richer understandings of time, place, and materiality are available to us, and I would suggest that geographers might reconsider the political potential of haunting tropes in their accounts of the colonial and postcolonial.

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Notes

1 G. Spivak, *A critique of postcolonial reason: toward a history of the vanishing present* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 173.

2 A. Gordon, *Ghostly matters: haunting and the sociological imagination* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 205–6.

3 D. Gregory, *The colonial present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2004).

4 D. Clayton, 'Absence, memory, and geography', *BC Studies* 132 (2001/2002), pp. 65–79.

5 I. Baucom, 'Spectres of the Atlantic', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 100 (2001), pp. 61–82.

6 A. Gupta, in Gregory, *Colonial present*; D. Moore in B. Braun, 'Environmental issues: global natures in the space of assemblage', *Progress in human geography* 30 (2006), pp. 644–54.

7 J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (London, Routledge, 1994).

8 E.g., W. Cariou, 'Haunted prairie: aboriginal "ghosts" and the spectres of settlement', *University of Toronto quarterly* 75 (2006), pp. 727–34; J. Comaroff, 'Ghostly topographies: landscape and biopower in modern Singapore', *Cultural geographies* 14 (2007), pp. 56–73; D. DeLyser, 'Authenticity on the ground: engaging the past in a California ghost town', *Annals of the association of American geographers* 89 (1999), pp. 602–32; Derrida, *Specters of Marx*; T. Edensor, 'The ghosts of industrial ruins: ordering and disordering memory in excessive space', *Environment and planning d: society and space* 23 (2005), pp. 829–49; K. Gelder and J. Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia: sacredness and identity in a postcolonial nation* (Melbourne, University of Merlbourne Press, 1998); M. Goldman and J. Saul, 'Talking with ghosts: haunting in Canadian cultural production', *University of Toronto quarterly* 75 (2006), pp. 645–55; Gordon, *Ghostly matters*; S. Pile, *Real cities: modernity, space, and the phantasmagorias of city life* (London, Sage, 2005); L. Robertson, *Imagining difference: legend, curse, and spectacle in a Canadian mining town* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2005); N. Royle, *The uncanny* (New York, Routledge, 2003); L. A. Stoler, 'Intimidations of Empire: predicaments of the tactile and unseen', in A. L. Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: geographies of intimacy in North American history* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2006), pp. 1–22; K. Till, *The new Berlin: memory, politics, place* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2005); J. Wylie, 'The spectral geographies of W.G. Sebald', *Cultural geographies* 14 (2007), pp. 171–88.

9 Two special sessions on 'spectro-geographies' were organized by Joanne Maddern and Peter Adey at the 2005 Institute of British Geographers meeting, and geographers have begun to consider the possibility of a 'spectral turn' extending into geographical scholarship (see J. Kneale, 'From beyond: H. P. Lovecraft and the place of horror', *Cultural geographies* 13 (2006), pp. 106–26.

10 Cheryl McEwan makes a similar observation in her recent piece on postcolonialism and the politics of enchantment (C. McEwan, 'A very modern ghost: postcolonialism and the politics of enchantment', *Environment and planning d: society and space*, 26 (2008), p. 29).

11 D. Haraway, 'A game of cat's cradle: science studies, feminist theory, cultural studies', *Configurations* 2 (1994), pp. 59–71.

[12] Catherine Parr Traill in Goldman and Saul, 'Talking with ghosts', p. 645.
[13] Earle Birney in Goldman and Saul, 'Talking with ghosts', p. 645.
[14] M. Northey, *The haunted wilderness: the gothic and grotesque in Canadian fiction* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1976).
[15] D. M. R. Bentley, 'Shadows in the soul: racial haunting in the poetry of Duncan Campbell Scott', *University of Toronto quarterly* 75 (2006), pp. 752–70,
[16] D. M. R. Bentley, *The Confederation group of Canadian poets* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004).
[17] D. C. Scott, *New world lyrics and ballads* (Toronto, Morang and Co., 1905).
[18] S. Dragland, *Floating voice: Duncan Campbell Scott and the literature of Treaty 9* (Concord, ON, Anansi, 1994).
[19] L. S. Groening, *Listening to old women speak: natives and alternatives in Canadian literature* (Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004).
[20] D. C. Scott, *The administration of Indian affairs in Canada* (Toronto, Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1931), p. 27.
[21] Cariou, 'Haunted prairie', p. 727.
[22] M. Atwood, *Strange things: the malevolent north in Canadian literature* (London, Virago, 2004).
[23] Goldman and Saul, 'Talking with ghosts'.
[24] Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*; D. Crouch, 'National hauntings: the architecture of Australian ghost stories', *Journal of the association for the study of Australian literature* (2007), pp. 94–105; P. Read, *Haunted earth* (Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 2003). See also S. Gunew, *Haunted nations: the colonial dimensions of multiculturalisms* (London, Routledge, 2004) for a consideration of haunting in both Canadian and Australian contexts.
[25] R. Bergland, *The national uncanny: Indian ghosts and American subjects* (Hanover, University Press of New England, 2000), p. 1.
[26] Government of Canada, Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: People to People, Nation to Nation (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), n.p. Available at: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/lk_e.html (accessed 10 April 2006).
[27] See the Spring 2006 issue of the journal, 75(2).
[28] M. M'Gonigle and W. Wickwire, *Stein: the way of the river* (Vancouver, Talon, 1989), p. 16.
[29] W. Wickwire, Personal Communication (Lytton, BC, 24 June 2006).
[30] These efforts were facilitated by a longer history of imagining the Stein in spiritual terms. The spiritual significance of the valley was noted by anthropologists as early as 1900 (see J. Teit, 'The Thompson Indians of British Columbia', in F. Boas, ed., *American Museum of Natural History, Volume II, Anthropology I, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition* (New York, The Knickerbocker Press, 1900) and has more recently been featured in various 'New Age' publications (e.g., *Power trips: the travel guide to mother earth's sacred spaces*, Issue 9, October/November 1998).
[31] M'Gonigle and Wickwire, *Stein*.
[32] 'Voices for the Wilderness, August 1–3, 1987. Stein Valley Festival', University of British Columbia Archives, spam 22025.
[33] B. Braun, *The intemperate rainforest: nature, culture, and power on Canada's west coast* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2002).
[34] Napoleon Kruger, in M'Gonigle and Wickwire, *Stein*, p. 147.
[35] David Suzuki, in M'Gonigle and Wickwire, *Stein*, p. 11.
[36] R. Dunstan and L. Andrew, *Lytton and Mount Currie Bands Stein Declaration* (Lytton and Mount Currie, BC, 1987); Institute for New Economics, *Stein Valley: an economic report for the people of Thompson Lillooet region* (Vancouver, Institute for New Economics, 1985); M'Gonigle and Wickwire, *Stein*; Western Canada Wilderness Committee, *Stein Valley: the choice is ours, where do you stand?* (Vancouver, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 1987).

[37] N. Kruger in M'Gonigle and Wickwire, *Stein*, p. 147.

[38] The Nlaka'pamux launched a comprehensive land claim with the federal government in the late 1980s. According to the Provincial Government's Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Lytton First Nation is currently engaged in treaty talks through the BC Treaty Commission, but the Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council (comprised of a number of other Nlaka'pamux Nations, excepting the Lytton Nation) continue to refuse to recognize the province as negotiator and are pursuing their claims through other channels.

[39] D. Rossiter and P. Wood, 'Fantastic topographies: neo-liberal responses to aboriginal land claims in British Columbia', *Canadian geographer* 49 (2005), pp. 352–67.

[40] D. Clayton, 'Absence, memory, and geography'.

[41] Q. Jordan-Knox, Personal Communication (Vancouver, BC, 22 March 2004).

[42] I have conducted only six in-depth interviews with visitors to the Stein Valley, all of whom are Canadian citizens, residents of British Columbia, identify as white, and are aged between 27 and 63. This is certainly not a sufficient sample of interviews to make claims about the prevalence of stories about the Stein's haunting, but five of the six interviewees were familiar with stories of the Stein's haunting before undertaking a trip to the park. These stories are thus suggestive rather than conclusive evidence of the Stein's haunting, but I would argue they are useful on these terms.

[43] M. Roger, Personal Communication (White Rock, BC, 14 March 2004).

[44] G. Tracey, Personal Communication (Surrey, BC, 14 March 2004).

[45] Cariou, 'Haunted prairie', p. 727.

[46] B.C. Parks, Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park, (Victoria, Government of British Columbia), Available at: http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/stein_val/stein_brochure.pdf (accessed 12 March 2004).

[47] Gelder and Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia*.

[48] Cariou, 'Haunted prairie', p. 728.

[49] Lytton Indian Band and Mount Currie Indian Band, 'Stein Perspective: the Lytton and Mt. Currie Indian Peoples' in Stein Valley Educational Report, 6 (1987), p. 8.

[50] G. Spivak, *A critique of postcolonial reason*.

[51] I. Baucom, 'Specters of the Atlantic', p. 75.

[52] C. Harris, *Making native space: colonialism, resistance, and reserves in British Columbia* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2002), p. 151.

[53] I. Baucom, 'Specters of the Atlantic', p. 64.

[54] Government of Canada, Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission, n.p.

[55] S. Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2004), Chapter 5.

[56] D. D. Moses and T. Goldie, eds, *An anthology of Canadian native literature in English* (Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1992), p. xvii.

[57] Dunstan and Andrew, Lytton and Mount Currie Bands Stein Declaration.

[58] Cariou, 'Haunted prairie', p. 730. See also J. S. Y. Henderson, 'Postcolonial ghost dancing: diagnosing European colonialism', in M. Battiste, ed., *Reclaiming indigenous voice and vision* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2000), pp. 57–76 for a consideration of how non-Aboriginal peoples have misunderstood ghost dancing and an interpretation of its contemporary importance.